Increasing the production capacity of Kudremukh Iron Ore Project

433. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether any decision has been taken to increase the capacity of Kudremukh Iron Ore Project ;

(b) if so, what are the details regarding the extent of increase, project cost and means of financing, completion time, export projections etc.; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in the negative, what steps Government are considering to make the Kudremukh Iron Ore Project profitable ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Steps taken to improve the profitability of Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited have already yielded results and the Company has recorded a profit during the first quarter of the current year. Further efforts in this direction continue to be made.

Telecast of Mahabharat Serial

434. SHRI KAMAL MORARKA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether an application has been received from the producer of the serial MAHABHARAT for extension beyond 52 episodes ;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto ;

(c) whether serials based on the epics of other religions are also under consideration for telecast on Doordarshan ; and

(d) the steps being taken to improve the quality of TV serials ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (PROF. K. K. TEWARY) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Since it is felt that the producer is not able to complete the epic story in 52 episodes, the Government is agreeable to extend this serial by some more episodes.

(c) A serial based on Biblical stories has been approved in principle for telecast on the national network.

(d) In order to improve the quality of TV serials, the Government have revised the scheme for sponsored serials. As per this scheme, applications were invited from experienced producers/directors for registration with Doordarshan as producers/directors. A selection Board consisting of knowledgeable non-official experts and senior officials has screened the applications received in this regard and has recommended a panel of 1305 names for registration as producers/directors with Doordarshan. In future, proposals for sponsored programmes will be invited only from those producers/directors who are registered with Doordarshan. Since only experienced persons from the field of art and films will be handling the proposals for sponsored serials in future, the quality of serials is expected to improve.

Constitution of Development Board for the Planned Growth of Trans yamuna area

435. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether population of trans-Yamuna area in Delhi has increased touching around twenty-eight lakh mark;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the basic civic amenities and community